

BULLETIN
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

FOUR TIMES A MONTH

NO. 206

EXTENSION SERIES 21

NOVEMBER 8, 1911

CIRCULAR CONCERNING THE DEBATING AND
DECLAMATION LEAGUE OF TEXAS SCHOOLS

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Entered as second-class mail matter at the postoffice at Austin, Texas

*To Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, and Pupils of Texas
Schools:*

Are you planning to have your school enter for the contests in debating and declamation, held under the auspices of the Debating and Declamation League? It is now high time to begin active preparation for these contests. The county contest is fixed for not later than March 1. In those districts where the meningitis epidemic, or other cause, has interfered with the local contests, the county contest may, with the approval of your district director, be deferred until the latter part of March. District contests, however, should be held early in April—not later than April 6, unless for very special reasons.

Remember that the primary purpose of this organization is to incite the pupils in the schools to give more attention to oral English and public speaking than has heretofore been the case. We want the movement to spread *to the schools generally*. Many teachers and county superintendents are doing good work, others have done—not enough. We already know that every one of the

sixteen districts will be represented in the final contests at the University in May. But we are not satisfied with this. We want *all* the schools—especially the country schools—to enter for the county contest in declamation, at least, if not for that in debate. If your county superintendent has not organized the schools for this purpose, let the principals take the matter up. If both superintendents and principals are indifferent or inactive, let the pupils organize and hold contests on their own account. Get some public-spirited citizen to offer a loving cup to the winning school in the county contest, to be held by such school for one year, and if any school wins the cup three years in succession, let it become the permanent property of such school. The offer of such a prize is a good commercial proposition for a local merchant, if the matter is well advertised, as it should be, in the county papers. Let the cup, in each instance, be awarded to a *school*,—a cup valued at \$25.00, say, to the winning school in the debate contest, and one valued at \$15.00 for the contest in declamation. For the district contests, correspondingly larger cups should be offered, valued at about \$50.00 and \$25.00, respectively. The G. A. Bahn Optical and Diamond Company, of Austin, has furnished the cup to the Austin District at wholesale cost, plus ten per cent, which is a little more than half of the usual retail prices. You can probably make a similar arrangement for your district with some local jeweler, who is interested in the contests; if not, an order can be placed with the Bahn Company. Thus two suitable cups for your county contests, together listed at \$40.00 retail, can be purchased for about \$25.00, and for the district contests two larger cups, of the aggregate retail value of \$75.00, can be secured for \$45.00, delivered. Talk it up, and *work* it up, and let us have these silver loving cups for prizes in every county and district contest.

Having secured the prizes mentioned, for the custody of the winning schools, try to arrange in advance for the traveling expenses of winning contestants in attending the district and final contests, by charging admission, it may be, to the county and district contests.

Please see that every school entering for either or both of the contests sends the membership fee of \$1.00 to J. A. Lomax, Treasurer, University, Austin. Up to this time not half of the

schools that intend to enter have sent the required membership fee. We want this done, not only to secure funds for certain expenses of the League, but also in order to get in touch with every school that is planning to enter for the contests. The \$1.00 fee, when once paid, entitles the school to enter all the contests provided for by the Constitution, and no school is entitled to enter any preliminary contest until this fee is either paid or arranged for in advance. Let county and district directors arrange to have the fees sent, perhaps out of gate receipts of the county and district contests.

The boys in a school will usually take an active interest in these contests if the matter is properly presented to them. It's a good movement and is gaining in momentum. *Help push it along.*

Cordially yours,

E. D. SHURTER,
Chairman of the Executive Committee.

January, 1912.

